TWO

# ADDRESSES

AT

CLEVELAND, OHIO,

*25 and 26 October, 1882.*

BY

ANDREW D. WHITE,

*PRESIDENT OF CORNELL UNIVERSITY.*

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*I. ON THE PLAN OF WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY.*
*II. ON THE EDUCATION OF THE FREEDMEN.*

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## *PREFATORY NOTE.*

The first of these addresses was given at the Luncheon of the Alumni of Western Reserve University, immediately after the dedication of Adelbert College, to which Mr. Amasa Stone had given five hundred thousand dollars.

The second was delivered at the final exercises of the annual meeting of the American Missionary Association, in the "Tabernacle" at Cleveland, ex-Governor Washburn of Massachusetts presiding, and about four thousand people being present. The opening address was given by the Hon. Rutherford B. Hayes, ex-President of the United States, and the third and closing one by the Hon. J. L. M. Curry, of Richmond, Va., Secretary of the Trustees of the Peabody Fund.

## *ON THE PLAN OF WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY.*

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I thank you heartily for this kind recognition, than which nothing could be more unexpected. But I would give far more than thanks. Allow me to present to you the most sincere congratulations,—not only my own, not only those of the University from which I come, its faculty, its trustees, its students, but I feel empowered, as fully as if credentials signed and sealed were in my hands, to present the congratulations of every New York institution of learning, nay, of every college or university in this land not here represented.

But I would single out, as the one thing for which congratulations are most justly due you, a feature which has been dwelt upon in the admirable address made by President Gilman this morning, and in the stirring speech made by President Hayes this noon—and that one thing is this: That the institution to-day inaugurated is the "ADELBERT COLLEGE OF WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY." That is the point. If to-day's dedication had simply added one more college to the four hundred pretending to do university

work, but inadequately equipped for doing it, which now exist, while I would have honored Mr. Stone for his munificence, I could not have admired him for his good sense. But in view of the reach of thought involved in the choice of this title, "*The Adelbert College of Western Reserve University*," I see something for the future here which this State of Ohio has long looked for, and which this land greatly needs,—and that is the foundation of a university, thoroughly manned, thoroughly equipped, upon this most happy site, under these most auspicious circumstances.

It is part of my business to be an instructor, and I cannot forbear here to preach a moment regarding the fundamental idea of this University. Let me press the point "here and now" that there should be devised at the earliest day possible, in a large and catholic spirit, with a thorough and patriotic devotion to the interests of this institution,—of Cleveland,—of Ohio,—of the whole country, a UNIVERSITY CONSTITUTION. It should be strong enough and broad enough for a great future. Adelbert College is one college of Western Reserve University. The great Case School of Applied Science should be another. Any future college, literary, scientific, legal, medical, theological, or educational establishment of any sort which is established here, should be made part of such university. All should be made equal in rights —each the peer of every other. I prophesy that there will come forward a man some day who will establish here a great observatory—perhaps with its own board of trustees. There may come a man who will establish a great library, with perhaps a million

dollars endowment, like the one just given to Cornell University. There may come some one who will be glad to found here a great chemical and physical laboratory. There may come some one wise enough to see that, in a centre like this, a school of industrial art, with museum and draughting-rooms, will be a most fruitful gift. I like the idea that each one of these institutions, if it have a considerable endowment, shall have its own independent existence. Let each, if you like, have its own independent board of trustees. Let there be a body of delegates from the faculty of each coming together and forming a university senate. Let the head of each of these colleges in rotation be the Chancellor of the whole university, to preside over the academic senate of the university and to confer the university degrees.

In this way, you will save much duplication of professorships and apparatus and much working at cross purposes. You will bring cosmos out of chaos. In this way, you will see spring up here, instead of a number of little warring institutions, each jealous of the other, a true university, renowned not merely in this land, but in other lands.

This is something perfectly simple, perfectly feasable, if you will only devote your hearts and yonr minds to it. Both the plan of such an institution and its development will require wisdom, forbearance, self-sacrifice; but if done, it will be a really great thing.

Other men are to be stimulated by the noble example of Mr. Stone and his compeers. We are standing at the beginning of a new era of munificence in our country. I prophesy to you, old alumni of

Western Reserve College, that in the future, if all will do their duty, you will see these confederated colleges, each preserving its own independence, all working together and constituting a central university, and with far greater glories than you ever dared dream of in your old organization. I hope this thought may dwell among you, that by co-operation the whole land may rejoice in seeing here at no very distant day one of the ten or twelve great universities of the country.

I believe there is a great work to be done by all the colleges of the land—even by the smallest. Their true mission, in my judgment, is becoming every day more and more clear—and none could be more noble—and that mission is to take students at an earlier period than they are now taken, and prepare them for the greater universities, carrying them to the beginning of the junior year. To do more than that involves a faculty of great extent, and equipment of great cost, such as only a few of the greater institutions can possibly have. Permit me also to hope that the collegiate institutions of Ohio will be, as far as possible, brought into union with this institution, either as colleges of it or as colleges preparatory to it, and that thus there shall be built up one of those universities which shall be the pride of our land and of our time.

## *ON THE EDUCATION OF THE FREEDMEN*

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At the close of the late civil war were presented several public questions, appalling by their magnitude and by the dangers of a wrong decision. Among the most important of these was this: What shall be done with all those millions of people lately chattels but now citizens—the wards of the nation—the wards of humanity?

There came two answers. Two paths lay open to the triumphant Union.

The first of these was the path of CONFISCATION. It was said: Resist at all hazards the development of a proletary class—a class without rights in the soil. Should you allow this, you will have exchanged the black sea of slavery for the red sea of pauperism. It was claimed that confiscation was *right*—that the freedman had, by a law higher than any human enactment, a right to the soil to which his unpaid labor had for generations given value. It was declared that *experience* favored such a policy. The example of Russia was cited, where, at the emancipation of the serfs, they were given property rights in the land of their former masters. But the plain Anglo-Saxon instinct was against this. May I not say that a re-

viving brotherly feeling was against it? Nay, may we not see a divine hand, which to a thoughtful historian is so apparent in many parts of our history, keeping the nation out of that path? Thank Heaven, confiscation, the path to new wells of bitterness, was not taken.

The second path was the very opposite of this—appealing to different methods, to different principles. That path was EDUCATION. More and more it was seen by clear-minded, strong-hearted, high-souled men and women that this was the right path. It was taken. It led at first through thickets of antipathy and thorns of hatred—across chasms of bitterness, and, worst of all, over deserts of indifference. Lives and treasure were poured forth upon it—the sweet lives of devoted women, the sacrifices of earnest men, the gifts of multitudes, the prayers of churches.

The gentleman who has preceded me has presented the work thus begun admirably from his point of view—the point of view taken by a statesman who has viewed the question from the highest position this Republic recognizes—the chief magistracy of the nation.[1] Permit me now to present it from mine—that of a teacher who, through the greater part of life, has been accustomed to point out the indications of God in history—of a divine purpose leading humanity through flowing tides and ebbing tides, through all that blossoms or decays, through all that stands fast or falters, through all that triumphs or suffers, to the goal which divine wisdom has set.

Others may call this choice of the path of educa-

[1] The opening address had been made by ex-President Hayes.

tion *Instinct.* I shall not disagree with them. Others may call it *Reason.* With them I shall disagree still less. But I shall still call it *Inspiration.* Of all that wondrous chain of events, so striking in their causes, so amazing in their results, which have welded this nation together at last, the most wondrous to me is this choice between these two paths.

Thomas Jefferson, the greatest political genius our country has ever produced, himself the owner of slaves, uttered in the early days of our Republic that prophecy which, as we read it now, seems inspired. It begins with the words: "I tremble when I remember that God is just." But, could Thomas Jefferson have seen the future, while he would have been struck with horror at the first part of the accomplishment of his prophecy—at the justness of God—he would have been led by its final part to adoration of God's mercy. For he would have seen, after the storm of wrath had passed over the whole nation, North and South, a radiant shining-forth of mercy, giving tenfold the old prosperity, making bright that which was before dark, making sweet that which was before bitter, and preparing the way for a greater and better national growth than had before been possible.

What, then, is the question which now confronts us? It seems to me simply this: How shall the path which the thought of the nation has thus chosen, or rather, which Heaven's mercy has indicated to us, be opened up? How shall it be made a highway to a noble future?

First of all, this must be done, it seems to me, by human benevolence and sacrifice. Already great

things have been done. The Peabody fund, the Slater fund, gifts of various sorts and for various purposes, have shown a sense that this is one method. It seems to me that this is by far the most effective agency for the development of *higher popular education*,—that is, for academies, high schools, and colleges, for all those institutions which give consistency and strength to the lower and intermediate education of the whole people—institutions which send out teachers, and which give tone to the whole effort.

Next, as to the *general moral and religious education* which shall leaven the whole system. For this we must rely mainly upon the Christian church, actuated and permeated, as we may hope, in all its branches by the spirit of its blessed Founder. The spirit of that greatest utterance since the world began—the Sermon on the Mount, that is the spirit upon which we must rely; and, in so far as the various bodies in the Christian church shall more and more sink their sectarian spirit and develop the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount—the Christian spirit—in this great work, it shall have more and more the blessing of its Founder.

But there must still remain a great field to which individual effort will be inadequate. I allude to the maintenance of *great systems of public schools*—systems which shall make the simple education of every child, white or black, a part of the natural and normal order of things—a system which shall give to every human being of the generations to come, of both races, such a degree of mental development as shall fit them for the citizenship which this Republic confers upon them.

How shall this be done? By private agency? Hardly. Vast as American munificence for education has been, we can hardly expect that individuals will do this part of the work. The State of New York expends yearly ten millions of dollars on its public school system. How can we expect from individuals every year contributions on such a scale? Can it be done by the States? Perhaps so; so it ought to be. But cannot the nation stimulate them? My proposition is, that it is not only the national right, but the national duty, to make liberal provision for encouraging the Southern States in this great work, so as to place in each State the strong nucleus of a public school system about which State effort may be rapidly concentrated. There are two ways in which this may be done. The first is by the appropriation of money. I for one would be glad to see it. It would be one of the best investments that the general government could possibly make. It would diminish the appreciable wealth of not one man within the borders of this vast republic. Not a single man, woman, or child would be made aware of such appropriation by any deprivation of any comfort.

But suppose the nation could not be brought to the point of making such a great appropriation. Is there no other method? There certainly is. Such a method was indicated more than a generation ago. Thoughtful men have frequently advocated it since. Far back in our history, William Ellery Channing, that apostle of mercy and right, declared that the proceeds of the public lands of the United States, as they were sold, ought to be appropriated—nay, ought to be considered as *consecrated*—to public education.

It would take no appreciable part of our revenue. It would not interfere at all with the development of public works. It would simply take that small part of the national income which is derived from the sale of its domain, and, instead of throwing it into the gulf of ordinary expenditure, would keep it and use it as a fund for making its people more fit for their duties and their destinies.

Several efforts have been already made in this direction. Once, indeed, a bill was prepared most carefully, was championed by some of the best men in the national Senate and in the House—and those of us who were in Washington and labored for its passage, contending against the indifference and the prejudice with which it was met, will recall with pride that amongst those who stood up for the measure most earnestly from first to last was James Abram Garfield, then a representative from Ohio. Various Presidents of the United States favored such a measure. It was favored by President Grant; and I rejoice to bear testimony in this State that it was favored by President Hayes, and that it was one of the measures urged by his administration—an administration which history will declare, as the voice of contemporary opinion across the sea has already declared it, one of the purest and noblest in American history.

At various times this measure has come near being a success—at one time *very* near—passing one House triumphantly, and failing to pass the other by a lack of very few votes.

I cannot refrain from stating here why it failed. There was indeed indifference. There was indeed the clamor of a certain portion of the press, whose

correspondents at Washington thrived by assigning vile motives for everything done, and in this way pandered to the love of sensational news. But this is not what destroyed this great measure fraught with blessings. What did destroy it, then? you will ask. It was simply the fact that the members could not give to the question the thought, and the study, and the time it demanded. Let one fact out of many be typical—let it indicate where the real difficulty was, and always will be, in the way of well-considered measures of administration, until the people insist on a reform. I was discussing the matter with a leading member of the House of Representatives, now a Senator of the United States, who favored the bill. I said to him: "Why not prepare a thorough and effective speech upon it? Why not arouse the House in regard to it? Why not rouse the country, as you are so well able to do? Why not, indeed, study up the question—the facts that warrant the measure, the means of carrying it out, and the results sure to follow?" He opened the drawer of his desk: it was packed with letters. "There," said he, "is the reason why I cannot. Those are the letters just received, full of applications for office,—full of requests for petty services. I have *no time* for this great public measure. I am expected to give my time mainly at the departments to secure offices or other favors for my constituents." And, on a similar occasion, a Senator of the United States, whose powers are acknowledged throughout the land, when I asked him why he did not champion such a great measure, pointed to his table and said: "There lie over fifty letters regarding a single appointment to office."

My friends, you will allow me to digress from the purpose of this meeting long enough to say that then it was I learned that the first necessity in the amelioration and proper development of our country is a reform in the civil service of the United States—a reform which shall give us a system of appointments to the myriads of minor offices based not upon the wheedling, and whining, and begging, and bargaining, and huckstering of office-seekers, or the manœuvering of representatives and senators, but upon capacity and integrity in the applicant ascertained by examination and probation—the only system by which we can free representatives, senators, members of the cabinet, nay, the President of the United States himself, from their present degrading position as purveyors to a few hundred thousand seekers of office, and give them time to discharge thoughtfully, carefully, their duties to these fifty millions of people.

To return to the main subject. It is not too late to pass some measure of this kind, appropriating either money or the proceeds of public lands for founding systems of public education in the States which as yet do not possess such systems. Let such appropriations of the proceeds of public lands or money be made. Let the fund be distributed upon the basis of illiteracy as shown by the census. It will thus reach the States and the individuals that most need it. It will form a vast basis for the education of the whole people, white and black; and on this basis private effort—the labors and sacrifices of individuals—can build the higher education, and the Christian church can crown all with moral and religious instruction.

But there may be raised a *political* objection. It may be said: This is a matter which will take care of itself. Leave it to public opinion in the States concerned. Leave it to time.

With this objection I take issue. Proper provision for education is not a matter to be left to time and chance. The greatest apostle of the *laissez faire* system—that system under which governments shall do nothing—John Stuart Mill, makes an especial exception as regards provision for public education. This, he declares, is one of those things which demand high and unselfish thought and vast resources, and which make no appeal to individual interests. It therefore cannot be left to individuals, but must be taken in charge by governments. Delay in the matter is dangerous. There is danger that the States which have no system of public education may fall into a listless condition. And then comes the danger of an uneducated populace. Of all governments, an uneducated republic is the worst. It is simply a despotism without responsibility. The worst individual despot can be influenced by public opinion—can be made to feel shame—can be made to feel pride—can be made to see his own responsibility. An uneducated mob never can. It was said of the old absolute monarchy of the Bourbons in France that it was a despotism tempered by epigrams. But what display of wit or wisdom shall temper the despotism of a mob of illiterate millions?

But again, there may be raised a a *social* objection. It may be thought, even though it be not avowed, by a portion of the class already educated, that it is best that the lower class remain in ignorance. A theory

of this kind has already been current among the aristocracy of the old world, and is not unheard of in a would-be aristocracy of the new. I insist that no mistake can be more dangerous. In a country like ours, to develop a vast subordinate class not sufficiently educated to read and understand something of public questions and discussions, is to place a powder magazine beneath your habitations, and beneath your institutions. It is making two strata—the upper a thin stratum of arrogance maintained by terrorism, the lower a thick stratum of crass ignorance and vague prejudice, liable at any moment to be inflamed by fanaticism or exploded by unreason. The only hope of society in those States where no foundations are laid for public instruction, is to see to it that all classes are given, by education, a chance at a fair understanding of public questions, and thus to put them out of the reach of incendiary fanatics and demagogues.

But, in addition to these objections, which touch the political and social system, there may be raised a *moral* objection. It may be said that public instruction does not necessarily improve the morality of a people. If that is the case in any instance, it is simply because the instruction is not at all what it should be. A proper system of public education is not instruction in mere reading, writing and ciphering. It should promote such reading as will elevate the character, even of the youngest scholar,—reading on noble themes,—the biographies of good and true men,—the records of excellent endeavor and high achievement. Such reading is but one of many ways in which, while the primary or intermediate education

is given, the great body of the people may be elevated on a higher moral plane.

But, finally, there may come a well-meant *religious* objection. It may be objected that provision for public instruction must be unsectarian, and, therefore, cannot reach the religious wants of the people. And it is exactly here that I would have all these great individual efforts of the Christian church come in, to supplement what is provided by the State and nation. Here it is that a vast field is open. The enlightened religious thought of the age should see to it that the great freed class of the South has more and more an enlightened religion—not fetichism, not formulas,—of these, from my own observation, I believe there are far too many already,—but a real, deep, overmastering religious influence, an influence which will diminish immorality, which will keep down crime, which will lead the class formerly in servitude to respect the proper relations between the sexes, and the rights of property.

And just here it is that this great society, whose work has been so noble thus far, sends forth its appeal to the country. To such agencies as this we must trust for the deepening and strengthening of individual character in the classes still illiterate. Herbert Spencer justly declares the development of character to be the greatest necessity of this country. I trust, with all these great agencies at work—the nation and the States discharging their proper duties toward primary and intermediate education,—wealthy and public-spirited individuals discharging theirs toward the advance of scientific, technical, literary education,—and, above all, the great Christian church

of the country, of every name, using as one of its handmaidens this society, doing a vast work for moral and religious improvement,—we may begin to see the dawn of a new period of enlightenment, of reason, of morality, and of religion. So shall we see this path of education which Heaven has indicated to us—hitherto so rough and thorny—broaden out into a great highway toward the enlightened Christian Republic which our fathers and brothers longed for and died for.